The Term Aṣ-Ṣaʿāfiqah

Its meanings, implications and ramifications

Shaykh ʿAlī b. Sayyid al-Waṣīfī
{رَحِمَهُ ٱللَّهُ}

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Introduction

الحمد لله رب العالمين والصلاة والسلام على أشرف الأنبياء

والمرسلين، سيدنا ونبينا محمد وعلى آله وصحبه أجمعين. وبعد

All praise is for Allāh, Lord of the worlds, and may blessings and peace be upon the noblest of the Prophets and Messengers, our master and our Prophet Moḥammad, and upon his family and all his Companions.

To proceed:

Below is translation [with a few small edits] of the 13th chapter of the book *Radd al-Ishkālāt wa-Kashfu-l-Mubhamāt fīmā Warada ʿan Moḥammad ibn Hādī min Aḥkām wa-Taʾwīlāt* [*Responding to the Problematic Objections and Uncovering the Ambiguities concerning the Judgments and Interpretations Reported from Moḥammad ibn Hādī*], authored by Shaykh ʿAlī b. Sayyid al-Waṣīfī {رَحِمَهُ اللهُ}.

We added several endnotes to clarify a term, context, ruling, cultural reference, or linguistic nuance that is not explicit in the translated wording itself, as we try accommodating all types of Muslims.

It is known that linguistic meanings [*al-Maʿānī al-Lughawīyah*] are restricted by religious technical usages [*al-Iṣṭilāḥāt ash-Sharʿīyah*]. Every speaker has an intended meaning in his speech, which he **must** make manifest. Otherwise, his speech is **deficient**. Generalized speech [*al-Kalām*

al-Mujmal] is **not** regarded as knowledge until it is explained according to the way of the scholars of *Ḥadīth* and transmitted reports [*ʿUlamāʾu-l-Ḥadīth wa-l-Athar*]. It is, moreover, the very loophole of the **people of innovation and desires** [*Ahlu-l-Bidaʿ wa-l-Ahwāʾ*], and of those who are **weak** in knowledge, in their use of generalized speech. This is the cause of their departure from the **correct** path [*al-Jāddah*].

Looking at the issue presently under discussion, we see that Shaykh Ibn Hādī applied the term *Ṣaʿāfiqah* to his opponents. This is a term **rarely** used among the scholars of the *Sharīʿah*. However, he uttered it despite the generality it contains, since it bears several Arabic meanings which must be restricted either by their technical meanings [*al-Maʿānī al-Iṣṭilāḥīyah*], or by what the judge and the speaker intended.

So, what did Ibn Hādī intend by this term? Did he intend by it the ignorant and those weak in knowledge? And what sort of ignorance did he intend: simple ignorance [*al-Jahl al-Basīṭ*] or compound ignorance [*al-Jahl al-Murakkab*]? Did he intend by it the people of desires, opinion, and analogy [*Aṣḥābu-l-Ahwāʾ wa-r-Raʾy wa-l-Qiyās*]? Or did he intend by it the people of scheming and plotting [*Aṣḥābu-l-Makr wa-l-Khabth*]? Or did he intend by it the lowest of the people [*Arādhilu-n-Nās*]? Or did he intend it as the name of one of the Arab tribes, or the name of an individual from among its members? All these meanings fall under the term *Ṣaʿāfiqah*.

The answer to that is that we see that Ibn Hādī clarified his intended meaning, specified what he meant, and explained his objective by what he transmitted from Imām ash-Shaʿbī, which Ibn Baṭṭah narrated from Ṣāliḥ b. Muslim, who said:

He said to me, [meaning ash-Shaʿbī]:

"*Indeed, you were only destroyed when you abandoned the reports [al-Āthār] and took up analogy [al-Qiyās]. This mosque has become hateful to me. Rather, it is more hateful to me than the rubbish heap of my house, O assembly of Ṣaʿāfiqah. The Ṣaʿāfiqah are those who go to the markets in the appearance of merchants, though they do not possess capital. The only capital one of them has is speech. The common people call one who is like this a Muhallis*."
[Reference: *al-Ibānah* | Page 603.]

This is what Ibn Hādī intended by the term *Ṣaʿāfiqah*, namely the people of opinion and analogy [*Aṣḥābu-r-Raʾy wa-l-Qiyās*]. It is the very intent of Imām ash-Shaʿbī. He did not depart from it, nor did he go beyond it. Otherwise, his citation of the speech of ash-Shaʿbī would contain no benefit, because the evidence [*ad-Dalīl*] must correspond to the reality of what is being indicated [*al-Madlūl ʿAlayh*] and must not contradict it.

Shaykhu-l-Islām said:

"*The evidence is necessarily tied to what it indicates. When the necessary ground [al-Malzūm] is established, the necessary consequence [al-Lāzim] is established. And when the necessary consequence is negated, the necessary ground is negated*." [Reference: *al-Jawāb aṣ-Ṣaḥīḥ*, 2/42.]

Ash-Shaʿbī applied this term, *Ṣaʿāfiqah*, to the people of opinion [*Ahlu-r-Raʾy*], those who turn away from the Book, the *Sunnah*, and the possessors of transmitted reports [*Aṣḥābu-l-Āthār*], turning instead to what they extract from invalid statements and analogical measures [*Maqāyīs Bāṭilah*]. He then described them as merchants who go to the markets while having no capital with which to buy, except speech.

The intended meaning is that the people of opinion and analogy [*Ahlu-r-Raʾy wa-l-Qiyās*] possess neither proofs nor evidences by which they convince people, or by which they argue for the soundness of their doctrines. Thus, Imām ash-Shaʿbī, {رَحِمَهُ اللهُ}, did not intend the broad linguistic meanings contained in the term *Ṣaʿāfiqah*, as some who defended Shaykh Ibn Hādī imagined and then exerted themselves for that purpose. He did not intend the common people and the ignorant who do not know where they are, nor where they are going. Rather, he intended by them the people of compound ignorance [*Aṣḥābu-l-Jahl al-Murakkab*] from among the people of opinion and analogy [*Ahlu-r-Raʾy wa-l-Qiyās*], those whom he described as bankrupt [*al-Iflās*]. They are those who imagine that they are upon something, while they are not upon anything.

They are among those who opposed the principles of *as-Salaf* [the pious predecessors], either by innovated and false rational premises [*Muqaddimāt ʿAqlīyah Bidʿīyah Bāṭilah*], or by private judgments from themselves by which they opposed the speech of *as-Salaf*. Because of that, they introduced innovations and desires [*al-Bidaʿ wa-l-Ahwāʾ*], and this became a reason for the Imams of *as-Salaf* to make their rulings severe against them, as is known. They would call them *ar-Rāʾīn* [the opinionates].

The application of this term indicates the censure of opinion [*adh-Dhamm li-r-Raʾy*] and of expanding independent reasoning [*al-Ijtihād*] through analogical measures and parallels [*al-Maqāyīs wa-n-Naẓāʾir*] while established evidences exist in the issue. As for when no evidence exists, then if the opinion is correct, they acted upon it; and if it is false, they censured it, rejected it, and rejected acting upon it. As for when there is

uncertainty and no ability to prefer one view over another [*at-Tarjīḥ*], then each person takes what gives him repose. Imām Ibn al-Qayyim explained this in detail in *Iʿlāmu-l-Muwaqqiʿīn ʿan Rabbi-l-ʿĀlamīn*.

As for matters of creed and methodology [*Umūru-l-Iʿtiqād wa-l-Manhaj*], **there is no room therein for opinion or independent judgment**. It is only hearing [*as-Samʿ*], and the consensus of *as-Salaf* {رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ}. If creed were based upon opinion according to what is rationally conceived, the *Ummah* would **never** have united upon anything in the religion; whoever wished would have said whatever he wished, and the revealed messages and prophecies [*ar-Risālāt wa-n-Nubuwwāt*] would have become void.

The one who has compound ignorance [*al-Jāhil al-Murakkab*] is the one who calls to falsehood while imagining that he is upon something good, whereas he neither does good nor is he upon anything. This term is applied to the people of opinion and analogy [*Aṣḥābu-r-Raʾy wa-l-Qiyās*] and the people of innovation [*Ahlu-l-Bidaʿ*].

Ibn Kathīr said:

"*Those who believe that they are upon something, while they are not upon anything. They are the people of compound ignorance [Aṣḥābu-l-Jahl al-Murakkab*], concerning His statement:

وَالَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا أَعْمَالُهُمْ كَسَرَابٍ بِقِيعَةٍ يَحْسَبُهُ الظَّمْآنُ مَاءً حَتَّىٰ إِذَا جَاءَهُ لَمْ يَجِدْهُ شَيْئًا

‘*But those who disbelieved, their deeds are like a mirage in a lowland which a thirsty one thinks is water, until, when he comes to it, he finds it to be nothing.*’ [***Sūrah an-Nūr***, 24:39].”

Reference: [*Tafsīru-l-Qurʾān al-ʿAẓīm*, 1/192.]

Dr. Ibn Hādī then applied this description to all of his opponents in a lecture he delivered in America. In it, he said:

“*Beware, with every caution, of these Ṣaʿāfiqah, those who came out against us in this period and in this time, and filled the world with noise, shouting, and wailing, while by Allāh they are upon nothing*.” End quote.

This is his statement: “They are upon nothing.” It is a description of non-existence [*al-ʿAdam*], because non-existence is not a thing in external reality. It has no real existence, no agent, and no cause for its existence. Nor is it an agent producing anything.

Ibn al-Qayyim said:

“*Non-existence [al-ʿAdam] is not a thing at all. Whatever is not a thing is not said to be an object acted upon by an agent*.”

Reference: [*Ṭarīqu-l-Hijratayn*, p. 101.]

Those whom Ibn Hādī described as “upon nothing” are students of knowledge attached to senior scholars, and they have clear traces in the *Daʿwah*. They are not non-existent so as to be attached to the people of innovation. The senior scholars are not a cause of non-existence. Rather, they are a cause of beneficial knowledge and righteous action. Their traces will continue, by the will of Allāh {تَعَالَى}.

There is no doubt that applying this term to them with this meaning, namely "they are upon nothing," is an **explicit *Tabdīʿ*** [declaring them innovators] against them. This is confirmed by the rulings of disputation, abandonment, and boycotting [*Aḥkāmu-l-Mukhāṣamah wa-l-Hajrān*] that he imposed upon them.

It is known that whoever is described in this way deserves no praise, because he views himself as being upon the truth, while he is not so, and because others are upon falsehood. These are the ones whom the people of the *Sunnah* [*Aṣḥābu-s-Sunan*] used to flee from, such as ash-Shaʿbī and others; they would abandon them and revile them.

There are many evidences indicating that, according to Imām ash-Shaʿbī, the application of this term was restricted to *Aṣḥābu-r-Raʾy* [the people of opinion], those who abandoned the *Sunan*, or some of them, in favor of rational opinions and analogical measures [*Maqāyīs ʿAqlīyah*] for which there was no evidence from the Book and the *Sunnah*. Thus, he was speaking about those who introduced an innovation [*Bidʿah*] that had not existed before. When they introduced it, he spoke harshly against them. Among these evidences is the following:

What was mentioned from Ṣāliḥ ibn Muslim, who said:

"*I was with ash-Shaʿbī, and we were three or four. Then he said, without any one of us asking him about anything: 'Indeed, you were only destroyed when you abandoned the reports [al-Āthār] and took up analogical measures [al-Maqāyīs]. By Allāh, this mosque has become hateful to me, until it is more hateful to me than the refuse-area of my house. These are the Ṣaʿāfiqah.'*"

[Reported by al-Khaṭīb in *al-Faqīh wa-l-Mutafaqqih*, 1/462.]

In another narration, he said:

"*I met ash-Shaʿbī, and he said: 'Indeed, these people of the mosque have become hateful to me, until they are more hateful to me than the rubbish heap.' I said: 'Who are they, O Abā ʿAmr?' He said: 'These opinionates [ar-Rāʾiyūn], Aṣḥābu-r-Raʾy [the people of opinion]. When the Aḥādīth of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ exhausted them, rather than memorizing them, they began to argue.*'"

[Reference: *al-Madkhal ilá-s-Sunan al-Kubrá* by al-Bayhaqī, p. 191.]

It is also narrated from him that he said:

"*I was with ash-Shaʿbī. When we entered the mosque, he said: 'These opinionates have become hateful to me, until they have become more hateful to me than the refuse-area of my house.' Ibn aṣ-Ṣabbāḥ added in his narration: 'And in the mosque, on that day, there was a people whose capital was speech.*'"

[Reference: *al-Ibānah al-Kubrá*, 2/515.]

Abū ʿUbayd said from ash-Shaʿbī that he said:

"*Whatever has come to you from the Companions of Moḥammad ﷺ, then take it, and leave whatever these Ṣaʿāfiqah say.*"

[Reference: *Gharību-l-Ḥadīth* of al-Qāsim ibn Sallām, 4/442.]

His intended meaning is that whoever opposes the *Ḥadīth* and speaks by opinion [*ar-Raʾy*] is attached to the *Ṣaʿāfiqah.*

Qabīṣah ibn ʿUqbah said:

"*When he would pass by them, he used to say: 'What are these Ṣaʿāfiqah saying?' Or he said: 'Banū Istihā.' Qabīṣah was uncertain. 'Whatever they say to you by*

their opinion, then urinate upon it; and whatever they narrate to you from the Companions of Moḥammad ﷺ, then take it.'"

[Reference: *aṭ-Ṭabaqātu-l-Kubrá* of Ibn Saʿd, no. 9733.]

By *Banū Istihā*, he meant the *Mawālī* [certain non-Arabs]. His intended meaning is that speech by opinion that opposes the *Sunnah* deserves nothing except to be placed in the privies, where it is urinated upon.

In *aṭ-Ṭabaqātu-l-Kubrá*, 6/263, through the route of Ṣāliḥ b. Muslim, he said:

"*I was with ash-Shaʿbī, and my hand was in his hand, or his hand was in my hand. We reached the mosque, and there was Ḥammād, meaning Ibn Abī Sulaymān, in the mosque, with his companions around him, and they had clamor and raised voices. He said, meaning ash-Shaʿbī: 'By Allāh, these people have made this mosque hateful to me, until they have made it more hateful to me than the rubbish heap of my house. O assembly of Ṣaʿāfiqah.' Then he turned back and we turned back.*" End quote.

He intended by these people *Murjiʾatu-l-Fuqahāʾ*.[1] They were the first to speak with *Irjāʾ*[2] before the emergence of *Murjiʾatu-l-Jahmīyah*. The first of the jurists to say that was Ḥammād b. Abī Sulaymān, and those who followed him among the people of al-Kūfah.

Maʿmar said:

"*We used to come to Abū Isḥāq, and he would say: 'From where have you come?' We would say: 'From Ḥammād.' He would say: 'What did the brother of the Murjiʾah say to you?' Then, when we entered upon Ḥammād, he would say: 'From where have you come?' We would say: 'From Abū Isḥāq.' He would say: 'Adhere to*

the Shaykh, for he is soon to be extinguished [i.e. he will probably die soon].' He said: Then Ḥammād died before him." [Reference: *Ikmālu Tahdhībi-l-Kamāl*, 4/151.]

And from al-Mughīrah, who said:

"*When Ibrāhīm died, al-Ḥakam and his companions sat with Ḥammād until he introduced what he introduced.*"

Al-Muqrī said: meaning *al-Irjāʾ*.
[Reference: *al-Jarḥ wa-t-Taʿdīl* of Ibn Abī Ḥātim, 3/146.]

When he said what he said concerning *al-Irjāʾ*, they spoke harshly against him and turned away from him.

An-Nasāʾī said in *al-Jarḥ wa-t-Taʿdīl*:

"*He is trustworthy, except that he is Murjiʾī*[3] *[one affected by Irjāʾ], and he is one of the jurists, the teacher of Abū Ḥanīfah.*"

In *al-Juʿdiyyāt*, ath-Thawrī said:

"*Ḥammād introduced something, so they turned away from him.*"

[Reference: *Ikmālu Tahdhībi-l-Kamāl*, 4/151.]

It was also said: The first person to speak with it was Dharr b. ʿAbdullāh al-Hamdānī.

Isḥāq b. Ibrāhīm said:

"*I said to Abū ʿAbdillāh, meaning Imām Aḥmad: 'Who was the first to speak concerning Īmān?' He said: 'They say: the first person to speak concerning it was Dharr.'*" [Reference: *Masāʾilu-l-Imām Aḥmad li-Isḥāq ibn Ibrāhīm*, 2/162.]

Salamah b. Kuhayl said:

"*Dharr described al-Irjāʾ, and he was the first to speak concerning it. Then he said: 'I fear that this will be taken as a religion.' When the books came to him concerning the regions, he said: 'I heard him say: Is this anything other than this?'*" [Reference: *as-Sunnah* of ʿAbdullāh b. Aḥmad, p. 81.]

These people introduced a statement contrary to what *as-Salaf* were upon, so they were ascribed to *Ṣaʿāfiqah*. The Imams of *as-Salaf* turned away from them and disliked their opinion because of the grave corruptions that resulted from their statement. Among these corruptions was the removal of action from *Īmān*, not affirming increase and decrease in it, and their saying that its foundation is one and that all are equal therein. They also said that exception [*al-Istithnāʾ*] is not permissible in it. Then they ended up declaring the one who makes exception [*al-Mustathnī*] to be a disbeliever, on the pretext that he is one who doubts his *Īmān*.

All of this indicates that the disagreement therein is a real disagreement, both in wording and in meaning. This statement was not known before *Murjiʾatu-l-Fuqahāʾ*. For this reason, ash-Shaʿbī and many of the Imams of *as-Salaf* did not love their narration, because they introduced, through their opinions and analogical deductions, a newly invented statement [*Qawl Muḥdath*] that was not said by the Messenger ﷺ and had not come from anyone among *as-Salaf*.

Most of the Imams counted this statement among the newly invented innovations [*al-Bidaʿ al-Muḥdathah*] related to name, wording, and ruling. Shaykhu-l-Islām held that it was among the innovations of actions and

statements, not among the innovations of creeds. Some of the people of knowledge disagreed with him concerning that and said: The disagreement is a real disagreement, not a merely formal one.

The point of evidence is this:

Ash-Shaʿbī's use of the term *Ṣaʿāfiqah*, in what has preceded, relates to one who **innovated an opinion** and measured it by his **intellect** as a doctrine, **without** having for it any **supporting** proof from an *Āyah* or a *Ḥadīth*.

The issue was **not** related to weak knowledge outside the sphere of opinions and analogical deductions [*al-Ārāʾ wa-l-Maqāyīs*]. Nor was it related to weak memorization, weak understanding, or lack of mastery. Otherwise, those people were jurists, people of knowledge, virtue, and religion. They had with them some knowledge of the sciences of the transmitted reports by which they were distinguished, except that their memorization of *Aḥādīth* wearied them, so they restricted themselves to their intellects in matters in which they had no right to exceed proper bounds.

Shaykhu-l-Islām said:

"*For this reason, the Irjāʾ of the jurists entered into the Ummah. Among the Ummah they are people of knowledge and religion.*"

[Reference: *Majmūʿu-l-Fatāwá*, 7/294.]

There are also those among them who gave precedence to ash-Shaʿbī himself in jurisprudence. Abū Isḥāq ash-Shaybānī said:

"*Ḥammād b. Abī Sulaymān is more learned in Fiqh than ash-Shaʿbī. I have not seen anyone more knowledgeable in Fiqh than Ḥammād.*"

[Reference: *Siyar Aʿlām-n-Nubalāʾ*, 5/234.]

Sufyān b. ʿUyaynah said:

"*There was not in al-Kūfah anyone like al-Ḥakam and Ḥammād ibn Abī Sulaymān.*" [Reference: *Siyar Aʿlām-n-Nubalāʾ*, 5/209.]

However, he, meaning Ḥammād, was not among the strong memorizers [*al-Ḥuffāẓ*]. Abū Ḥātim ar-Rāzī said:

"*He is upright in Fiqh, but when the report [al-Athar] comes, he becomes confused.*" [Reference: *Siyar Aʿlām-n-Nubalāʾ*, 5/234.]

Before that, ash-Shaʿbī had said concerning them:

"*When the Aḥādīth of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ became too difficult for them to memorize, they began to argue.*"

[Reference: *al-Madkhal ilá-s-Sunan al-Kubrá* by al-Bayhaqī, p. 191.]

Despite the fact that ash-Shaʿbī disliked them because of the opinion [*ar-Raʾy*] they introduced, and despite his forbidding that knowledge be taken from them in this respect, he did not forbid taking from them what they narrated from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ. For this reason, he said:

"*Whatever they say to you by their opinion, then urinate upon it; and whatever they narrate to you from the Companions of Moḥammad ﷺ, then take it.*"

That is because they erred through independent reasoning [*Ijtihād*], and they slipped through an exercise of judgment for which they had no predecessor among *as-Salaf* [the pious predecessors], except that their

intellects produced it. They then thought that it was the intended truth and followed it. At that time, they did not have innovated foundations [*Uṣūl Bidʿīyah*] and rational premises [*Muqaddimāt ʿAqlīyah*] upon whose path they proceeded.

Thus, he commanded that what they narrated from the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ be taken, on condition that what they narrated was not an apparent supporting proof for their innovation [*Bidʿah*].

Therefore, ash-Shaʿbī did not intend them from the angle of weak knowledge and weak *Fiqh*. Rather, he intended them from the angle of opinion and analogy [*ar-Raʾy wa-l-Qiyās*] concerning the issue of *Īmān*.

It is known that *as-Salaf* {رَضِيَ اللهُ عَنْهُمْ} used to reject that there be analogy [*Qiyās*] in the *Sunnah*.

Imām Aḥmad said:

"*There is no analogy [Qiyās] in the Sunnah. No examples are to be struck for it. It is not grasped by intellects, nor by desires. Rather, it is only following [al-Ittibāʿ] and abandoning desire [Tarku-l-Hawá].*"

[Reference: *Uṣūlu-s-Sunnah* of Imām Aḥmad, p. 17.]

They used to hate the people of opinion [*Aṣḥābu-r-Raʾy*], and they would prohibit following their way and tracing their reports.

Ibn al-Qayyim said:

"*Ibn Jarīr mentioned in his book Tahdhību-l-Āthār, from Mālik, that he said: The Messenger of Allāh ﷺ passed away, and this affair had been completed and perfected. Therefore, the reports of the Messenger of Allāh ﷺ must be followed, and opinion must not be followed. For whoever follows opinion, then if another*

man comes who is stronger than him in opinion, he will follow him. Thus, whenever a man comes who overcomes you, you will follow him."

[Reference: *Iʿlāmu-l-Muwaqqiʿīn ʿan Rabbi-l-ʿĀlamīn*, 1/62.]

After this preceding presentation, can anyone attach the students of al-ʿAllāmah Rabīʿ and the *Shuyūkh* of al-Madīnah who are in dispute with Dr. Ibn Hādī to *Ṣaʿāfiqah*, despite what this meaning contains of blame and rebuke? These *Duʿāh* [callers] did not speak with *Irjāʾ* and rejection [*ar-Rafḍ*]. They did not speak with *Tajahhum*[4] and *Iʿtizāl*[5]. They did not take their innovated statements as foundations for their *Daʿwah* so that this description would descend upon them, nor did they prevent people absolutely from benefiting from them, expel them from *Salafīyah*, and say: "They are upon nothing."

The matter does not go beyond the fact that they erred in some issues, either through a slip of the tongue or through interpretation [*Taʾwīl*]. Yet they were quick to apologize and to clarify their *Salafī* creed. Therefore, if Dr. Ibn Hādī intended to describe them with simple ignorance [*al-Jahl al-Basīṭ*] and weakness of knowledge, as some of them claim, then why did he judge them with a generalized term that includes all false descriptions, evil traits, and blameworthy manners?

Is this not from the signs of the people of innovation and desires [*Ahlu-l-Bidaʿ wa-l-Ahwāʾ*]? They utter generalized speech, and people increase thereby only in delirious confusion and disorder.

Imām Ibn al-Qayyim said in *an-Nūnīyah*:

"*So, adhere to detailed clarification and exposition,*
for unrestricted wording and generalization without clarification,

Have corrupted this existence
and confused minds and opinions in every age."

The claim that Ibn Hādī intended weakness in knowledge and simple ignorance [*al-Jahl al-Basīṭ*], as some of those fanatically attached to him have interpreted on his behalf, renders his citation of the report of ash-Shaʿbī completely misplaced. That is because the people of simple ignorance who are imitators [*al-Muqallidah*] have neither opinion [*Raʾy*] nor analogy [*Qiyās*]. They do not know where they are, nor where they are going. The imitators merely follow the doctrines of their scholars. No blame or censure falls upon them, because they are incapable of understanding, perceiving, and fully investigating matters.

Ibn Kathīr said:

"*The simply ignorant imitator [al-Jāhil al-Basīṭ al-Muqallid] is the one who does not know where he is going, nor does he know the condition of the one leading him. Rather, as is said in the proverb to the ignorant person: 'Where are you going?' He says: 'With them.' It is said: 'So where are they going?' He says: 'I do not know.'*" [Reference: *Tafsīr Ibn Kathīr*, 6/71.]

These are the common people [*al-ʿĀmmah*], who are advised and taught gently. Severity is not used with them, they are not boycotted [*Hajr*], and they are not treated as *Aṣḥābu-r-Raʾy wa-l-Qiyās* [the people of opinion and analogy], because of the ease with which they can be turned away from what they are upon. This is unlike *Aṣḥābu-r-Raʾy*, for repentance is difficult for them because they see themselves as being upon the truth.

In reality, if the issue were that they were merely weak in knowledge, then the matter would not be restricted to some of them. Rather, it would

include Ibn Hādī himself, all of his peers, and his companions in the *Fitnah*. To verify that, they must all be examined, so that we may know their rank in knowledge collectively.

Even if Ibn Hādī were more knowledgeable than those whose errors became many, and even if they deserved thereby this label, namely *Ṣaʿāfiqah*, then Ibn Hādī himself must be one of them, for his errors in *Tafsīr* [exegesis], *Fatwá* [legal verdicts], judgment, and history are grave and numerous, as is evident.

If we establish this before the observers with proofs and evidences, then they will have no escape except to apply to him, his companions, and his followers what Shaykh Rabīʿ said concerning them:

"*Those who attack their brothers by saying that they are Ṣaʿāfiqah, they themselves are the Ṣaʿāfiqah*." End quote.

As for those who say [about Shaykh Rabīʿ], "His Eminence, the father," and, "We are with His Eminence, the father," then they must magnify his rulings, and they must look into his proofs and evidences. As for them using him to praise and validate themselves while they are, in reality, his opponents, then this is shifting coloration and deception. It does not pass upon the people of knowledge [*Ahlu-l-ʿIlm*] and the pillars of understanding and discernment [*Asāṭīnu-l-Fahm wa-l-Firāsah*]. It only passes upon fools, the deluded, and the unstable.

[1] *Fuqahāʾ al-Murjiʾah* {فُقَهَاءُ الْمُرْجِئَةِ}: Literally, "the jurists of the *Murjiʾah*." This expression refers to a category of early jurists associated with a lighter form of *Irjāʾ*. They generally held that *Īmān* [faith] consists of inner belief and verbal affirmation, while righteous deeds are obligatory and essential to religious practice, but not part of the definition of faith itself. *Sunnī* scholars distinguished this view from the more extreme forms of *Irjāʾ*, while still regarding it as contrary to the doctrine of *Ahlu-s-Sunnah*.

[2] *Irjāʾ* {إِرْجَاء}: Literally, "postponement," "deferral," or "putting something back." In Islamic theology, it refers to the doctrine that outward deeds are not part of the essence of *Īmān* [faith]. According to the creed of *Ahlu-s-Sunnah*, *Īmān* consists of belief in the heart, speech upon the tongue, and action of the limbs. It increases through obedience and decreases through sin. For this reason, *Sunnī* scholars criticized *Irjāʾ* as a theological error that separates faith from the deeds that complete, strengthen, and manifest it.

[3] *Murjiʾī* {مُرْجِئِيّ}: An adherent of *Irjāʾ*, a theological doctrine concerning the relationship between faith and deeds. In *Sunnī* theological usage, a *Murjiʾī* is one who excludes outward deeds from the essence of *Īmān* [faith], or who holds a view that weakens the necessary connection between faith, obedience, and righteous action. The term is used with varying degrees of severity, since the early *Murjiʾah* were not all upon one level.

[4] *Tajahhum* {تَجَهُّم}: A term meaning the adoption of, inclination toward, or influence of *Jahmī* doctrine, associated with Jahm b. Ṣafwān and his followers. In *Sunnī* theological usage, it commonly refers to doctrines such as negating or figuratively emptying the Divine Attributes of Allāh, denying that the *Qurʾān* is the uncreated Speech of Allāh, and reducing *Īmān* [faith] to inner knowledge. The term is often used polemically in the writings of the scholars to warn against approaches to creed that undermine affirmation of what Allāh affirmed for Himself and what His Messenger ﷺ affirmed for Him.

[5] *Iʿtizāl* {ٱعْتِزَال}: The doctrinal orientation associated with the *Muʿtazilah*, an early theological school that gave decisive authority to speculative reason in matters of creed. Among their well-known principles are their claim that the *Qurʾān* is created, their

denial of the believers' seeing Allāh in the Hereafter, their figurative treatment or negation of many Divine Attributes, and their doctrine concerning the grave sinner as occupying an intermediate status between belief and disbelief. In *Sunnī* theological literature, *Iʿtizāl* is usually treated as a deviation from the creed of *Ahl as-Sunnah wa-l-Jamāʿah.*